

NOTES ON THE FAMILY OF SPREULL

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MCMXV



CALDOUN.

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COLLECTED AND ARRANGED BY

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NOTE

THE material for these Notes has been obtained from many sources. Care has been taken to exclude anything which did not seem to be vouched for by good authority. An endeavour has been made to present the material in its original wording, but sometimes this has been impossible, for inaccuracies and contradictions were encountered and were corrected or reconciled. A fuller reference to authorities would have been desirable, and may be supplied at some future time. Possibly these Notes may be the means of eliciting further information from the various members and connections of the Family of Spreull.

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The Spreull Family

THE name Spreull is said to be one of the Scottish surnames taken from Norman places.

Walter Spreull is witness to a grant of land by Maldouin, third Earl of Lennox, who succeeded to his father in 1224 and died in 1270.

Lennox was an ancient Earldom which comprehended the original sherifffdom of Dumbarton, consisting of the whole of the modern county and a large portion of Stirlingshire, with part of the counties of Perth and Renfrew. The name was originally Leven-ach, a Gaelic term signifying "the field of the Leven," or smooth stream. Levenachs, in the plural number, was the name given to the extensive and contiguous possessions of the Earls of that district, and, being spelled and written Levenax, became naturally shortened into Lennox.

Maldouin or Maldwin, the third Earl, was one of the guarantees on the part of King Alexander II. when the differences between that monarch and

King Henry III. of England were accommodated in 1237.

Walter Spreull was witness to four deeds by Malcolm, fourth Earl, who was one of the *Magnates Scotiae*, and who is supposed to have died in 1292. In two of these deeds occur the words: "*Hiis testibus . . . Waltero Spreull tunc temporis seneschallo nostro.*"

Walter Spreull was "*senescallus de Dumbartoun*" to Malcolm, fifth Earl, and was threatened with excommunication upon his account in 1294. On 13th July, 1291, this Earl took the oath of homage to King Edward. Between 1292 and 1297, almost all the heads of the principal families in Scotland swore fealty to King Edward, and in the list of those who did so in the document called the *Ragman Roll* we find the name of Walter Spreull "*senescalli comitis de Lennox.*"

In 1297 Lennox deserted to Wallace at the battle of Stirling, and was with Bruce in 1305.

Walter Spreull, in 1306, obtained a charter of the lands of Dalquherne and Dalmure from Malcolm, Earl of Lennox, and is described therein as of Caldoun. Walter Spreull is witness to a charter by King Robert the Bruce, dated 28th Sept., 1308.

"Caldoun or Cowdon is in the Parish of Neilston in Renfrewshire. Proceeding down hill in a south-west direction to the Paisley and Irvine road, and

passing Crofthead mill, and the handsome residence of its proprietor, a few minutes' walk brings us to the ruins of Caldoun or Cowdon Ha', situated on the summit of a steep bank, beneath which, by the side of the highway, the Cowdon burn rushes murmuring on to its junction with the Levern in the immediate vicinity. Cowdonhall was long possessed by the distinguished family of Spreull."

He was succeeded by his son Walter, who held the lands for a long period. He is noted, in 1366, as paying a contribution to the Barony of Glasgow. The name of his immediate successor does not appear, and this probably is due to the difficulties in which the Lennox family were involved at this time.

Isabella, daughter of the Earl of Lennox, was, in 1391, married to Murdoch, Duke of Albany, Regent of Scotland. The Earl's connection with Albany made him for a time one of the most potent noblemen in the kingdom, but it proved fatal to him in the end. On the return of James I. from his long captivity in England, he was one of the first victims of the rage of that monarch against all connected with the house of Albany. Lennox was committed to prison in Tantallon, tried for high treason, and executed in 1425 on the Heading Hill, Stirling, being in his eightieth year. His son was imprisoned in the island of the Bass, and was subsequently executed 1425.

Walter Spreull resigned the lands of Caldoun in 1441 in favour of his son and heir-apparent,

Thomas Spreull, who witnesses a charter in 1466, recorded in the *Register of the Great Seal*. His son,

John Spreull, was in possession of the estate in the early years of the sixteenth century, having received the lands by charter in 1481.

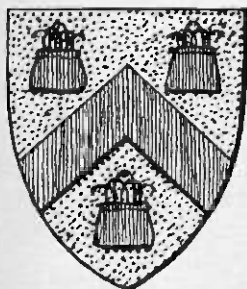
The connection of the family with Glasgow had long been an intimate one in consequence of the Spreulls being feudal vassals of the Earls of Lennox, who had exercised almost sovereign sway in the city for many years. It was in the Stable Green that the family of Lennox acquired their first residence in the city, by the purchase of a house, in 1509, by Earl Matthew, afterwards Provost of Glasgow, from the rector of Stobs. A detachment of the citizens of Glasgow was led to Flodden by their Provost, the Earl of Lennox, who was slain in that battle. The name of John Spreull of Caldoun may be found repeatedly in the *Diocesan Register of Glasgow* for 1508-1511.

In 1509 he mortgaged part of the lands of Dalmore, but in 1512 redeemed the mortgage. He had issue—Robert, John, Janet, and possibly another John.

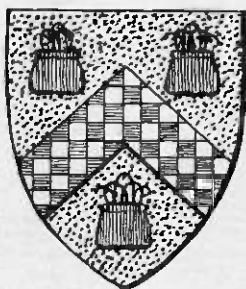
Janet, died 1550, married Gabriel Semple, brother of Lord Semple.

John, the younger son, is noted as a chaplain in

No. 1.



No. 2.



THE ARMORIAL BEARINGS OF THE SPREULLS
OF CALDOUN.

- No. 1. Bearings are: Or a fesse cheque azure and argent between three purses (or palmer's scrips) gules.
- No. 2. Or a chevron cheque azure and argent between three purses gules.

1503, a notary public, commissary of the archbishop of Glasgow, and one of the judges in the Consistory of the Metropolitan Church of Glasgow in 1505. In 1505 he was possessor of the perpetual Chaplaincy of St. John the Baptist in the Metropolitan Church of Glasgow. In 1507 he was Vicar of Dundonald and Professor of Philosophy in the College of Glasgow, and was subsequently appointed Rector of the University and a Canon of the Cathedral. In 1509 he was possessor of the perpetual Vicarage of Carmunnok.

In 1529 he is rentalit in ane merk land of the Lambhill . . . and after his decease, William Spreull, his brother's son, whom failing to John, his father. This brother John and nephew William appear to have both predeceased him, for Janet, a daughter of his brother John, was rentalit in this land in 1557, and disposed of it the following year.

He purchased the lands of Ladymuir from Gabriel Semple, his brother-in-law, Castlehill, Blackairn, within the Lordship of Provan in the Diocese of Glasgow, King's Meadows, and a fair lodging in the city of Glasgow.

By Disposition, dated 1541, and Charter of Confirmation under the Great Seal, he settled these lands upon his brother Robert and his nephew John, the son of Robert. He died in 1555, when his lands came into the possession of his nephew John.

Robert, the oldest son of John of Caldoun, succeeded to his father's estates in 1515. He was a burgess of Paisley. His son

John, who succeeded to his father's and his uncle's estates, was in possession in 1555. The estates of Dalquherne and Dalmure no longer continued in his possession, as they passed under the forfeiture by the Earl of Lennox in 1545. Upon the Reformation he was made Rector of Cambuslang and a Burgess of Glasgow. He left two sons, John and Thomas.

John, the eldest, was Provost of Renfrew and proprietor of Caldoun in 1590 and 1606. He left two sons, James and John—

James, the eldest, succeeded to the estates, and sold them in 1622 to Alexander Blair of that ilk, who assumed the name of Cochran on his marriage with Elizabeth, heiress of Cochran. James died unmarried. His brother

John became Town Clerk of Glasgow and Principal Clerk of Session. He was born about the year 1615, and was educated at the University of Glasgow, where, after passing through the usual literary and philosophical classes, he took the degree of Master of Arts in 1635. He was a great politician, and no admirer of the Stewart Kings.

On 28th April, 1651, he is mentioned as having taken part in a riot in which a committee opposed

the Provost and city servants. On 14th September, 1660, he was imprisoned in Edinburgh Tolbooth along with Provost Graham of Glasgow, being both reckoned favourers of the Western Remonstrance. On 7th September, 1661, he was deposed from his office by the magistrates for having been a subscriber to the Western Remonstrance, and on the ground that he was "ane of those who has shown themselves disaffected to his Majesty's Government." It was also proved that the "said Mr. John had lykways verie oft and divers tymes compeired against the said Magistrates and Counsell of this Burgh, and in the Public Meetings and Counsell of the late Usurper." By Middleton's infamous secret fining in 1662 the quota laid on Mr. John Spreull, late clerk of Glasgow, was £1200.

On 18th December, 1664, an Act of Council was passed respecting him, of which the following is a copy: "The Lords of Council considering that Mr. John Spreull late Town Clerk in Glasgow having been cited before the Commission for church affairs to answer for his disobedience to the laws, and Disaffection to the Government, thereby established, he for eviting the Sentence of the said Judicatory, did for some time withdraw himself forth out of the country, and having privately returned did carry himself most suspiciously by travelling secretly from place to place in the night-

time ; for which being apprehended and brought before the Council, and the Oath of Allegiance being tendered to him, he refused the same alledging he had not freedom to sign the same, by reason of the tie that lay upon him, by the Oath of the Covenant. Wherefore the said Lords judging it unjust that any person should have the benefit of the Protection of His Majesty and enjoy the liberties of a free subject, who refuse to give their oath of allegiance, Ordain the said Mr. John Spreull to enact himself under the pain of death, to remove out of the kingdom against the 1st of February next and not to return without a license, and find caution to behave peaceably until then, under pain of two thousand pounds, and not to go within six miles of Glasgow." He lurked some years at Berwick and Newcastle and then went to Holland, where he remained for several years.

On his return to Scotland in November, 1671, as he was then advanced in years and infirm in body, he hoped liberty would be allowed him to remain at home in peace. But in this he was mistaken. The Government, instigated by the bishops, caused him to be brought prisoner from his own house to the Tolbooth of Edinburgh.

On 29th August, 1672, he presented a petition to the Council in which he stated, " That he hath subjecte himself to the act of banishment he was

laid under on account of mere Nonconformity, now for eight years, and falling under sickness in his exile, he had returned for his health, and since November last when he returned hath been at no conventicles yet was taken up and imprisoned, now under his old age and many infirmities begs he may be liberate." The Council allowed him to be liberated upon giving Bond and Caution to compear when called, under penalty of two thousand merks. Among the Bonds of Caution accepted by the Privy Council there is one of date 18th September, 1679, in which "John Spreull writer in Glasgow," promises not to take up arms again against His Majesty.

However, we find that he was in arms at Bothwell Bridge and Drumclog in 1679. By an Act of the Council, dated 28th July, 1683, he was sent to the Bass, where he lay for some years. He was subsequently released, and died within a year or two afterwards.

The lands of Deanfield in Renfrew, in that part called Westsheill, were sold by George Duncan in 1657 to John Spreull, town clerk of Glasgow.

Late in life he wrote a book entitled *The Lord's Dealings with Me*. He had issue, a daughter Ann, born 1643, died 1686, who married her cousin James Spreull, apothecary in Paisley, in 1674. Also a son John, who was at Bothwell Bridge and Drumclog. According to one account this son

married Agnes Spreull of Milton and had a son, Andrew Spreull of Blackairn. The following extract probably refers to this John Spreull of Milton.

At Glasgow the sixteen day of April one thousand seven hundred and two years.

The which day Robert Yuill Dean of Gild and Brothern of Counsell sitting in Judgement ordains That Counsell plans number five upon the East Dyke of the new Kirk Yard consisting of eight foot or thereby of breadth south and north conform to the pillars on the said Kirk Yard dyke and twelve foot of length East and West bounded with the dyke on the East. The Burial plan number sixth on the South. The Kirk Yard on the West and the Burial plan number four on the North platt. To appertain and belong to John Spreull of Milton and in all time cumming. In respect payed ffyftie merks Scots to the managers of the building of the said new Kirk Yard for to the of the beuilding of the said

Signed JAS MCBRYD.

According to another account he married Isabella, only child of Hugh Crawford of Cloberhill, Dumbartonshire, and, succeeding to the land, assumed the surname of Crawford. In 1716, John Spreull executed a deed of entail by which he destined the lands of Cloberhill and Drumchapel, which he called



COWDON OR CLOBERHILL.

Cowdon, the name of the old family estate, to his heirs male, whom failing, his heirs whomsoever. Of his marriage were born eight daughters. Agnes, wife of —. Hunter, whose grandson, Andrew Hunter Spreull Crawford, succeeded to the estate. On the death of this gentleman in 1837, Sir William Alexander, Chief Baron of Exchequer, grandson of the eldest daughter of the entailer, succeeded to the estate.

Macdonald's *Rambles Round Glasgow*, published by Thomas Murray & Son, Glasgow, MDCCCLVI., page 304 :

CLOBER, OR COWDONHILL.

From the Red Town the road gradually ascends to a considerable eminence called Clober, or Cowdonhill, which commands an extensive and beautiful prospect of the surrounding country. On the summit of this elevation, and overshadowed by a girde of trees, stands the ancient mansion of Cowdon, a dreary, desolate, and wobegone looking edifice. This structure is two stories in height, and has at one period been of considerable extent. It was in bygone years the seat of a family named Crawford. About the beginning of last century it passed by marriage, with the extensive estates attached to it, into the possession of a certain John Sprewl, who thenceforth adopted the double surname of

Sprewl Crawford. From various dates, which are still legible on the walls, it would appear that the building has undergone extensive alterations at different periods. Over the doorway there is a heraldic carving, much defaced by time, but on which a bird and a star are still observable. On one of the gables, which has lately been rebuilt with the old material, there is a star, with the date 1666; and on the front of the tenement, in a sadly dilapidated condition, is a sun-dial, with the name of John Sprewl and Isabella Crawford inscribed on it, with the date 1707.

Strange stories are current in the countryside concerning this "bleak house." A spot is pointed out in the neighbourhood where the grass will not grow, and which, according to tradition, was the scene of some dark deed in the days of yore. Couple this fact with the circumstance that a quantity of human bones were, many years ago, found in a portion of the edifice which was known as "Cowdon's den," and the intelligent reader will have no difficulty in coming to the conclusion that the house must be haunted. Such, according to popular rumour, is indeed the case. People shake their heads when spoken to on the subject, and hint more than they are willing to express. One old lady of the Crawford family, we are informed, having hidden a pot of gold in a niche of the wall

during her life, could "get nae rest in her grave" afterwards, until she had revealed the secret. A story is also told of a certain wicked laird, a friend and associate of Claverhouse, the persecutor, who was an occasional visitor here. This worthy, on his death-bed, is said to have ordered the servants to heap immense quantities of coals on the fire, that he might have a foretaste of what was awaiting him in the state of existence upon which he was about to enter. Of course, such an uncannie end could forebode no good for the future, and it is said the laird is still doomed to revisit, "in his shirt of fire," the glimpses of the moon! If such be really the case (and we are not by any means prepared to prove the reverse), it must certainly gall him sadly if spirits care for such sublunary things, to witness the decay which has recently befallen his former dwellings. Externally, it has, indeed, a most ghastly and doleful appearance, while the interior, *sic transit gloria mundi*, is inhabited, not by owls and bats, but by several families of colliers. A section of the edifice has also been fitted up as a counting-house and store for a neighbouring colliery.

Before leaving Cowdonhill we may mention that a curious relic of antiquity was for many generations in the possession of the family. This was a silver spoon, the mouthpiece of which was not less than

three inches in diameter, and had the following legend inscribed on it :

“ This spoon I leave in legacie
To the maist-mouthed Craufurd after me.”
1480.

At a subsequent date the following limping but pithy lines were also engraved on this gigantic table implement :

“ This spoon you see,
Is left in legacy ;
If ony pawn’t or sell’t
Cursed let him be.”

Thomas, the younger son of John, who was Rector of Cambuslang, took a prominent part in public affairs during the latter years of the reign of James V. and throughout the turbulent career of Queen Mary. His faithfulness to the Queen was rewarded by a Grant of the lands of Dalmure and Dalquherne, which his ancestors had held under the superiority of the Earls of Lennox but which had fallen to the Crown under the forfeiture in 1545 of Matthew, Earl of Lennox, the father of Lord Darnley.

This charter is dated 1559 and is granted in the name of the Queen and King Henry. He survived to witness the overthrow of her power, and in 1576 his name is entered in the Register of the Privy Council as party to a Bond of Caution. His son

John was born 1607, died 1685 ; married in 1642 Janet, died 1690, daughter of Bailie James Alexander,

Merchant of Paisley, and his wife Janet Maxwell of Pollok. Bailie Alexander was descended from the first Earl of Stirling.

He had issue James, born 1643, died 1680; married 1674 Ann Spreull, born 1643, died 1686.

John (Bass), born 1646, died 1722; married (1) Isobel Clarke, died 1683, married (2) 1696 Margaret Wingate, died 1756.

Alexander.

Thomas, died 1676.

Lilias, died 1683; married Thomas Reid.

Catherine, married John Buchanan.

“John Spreull, Merchant Burgess of Paisley, was Senior Magistrate six times between 1648 and 1658. He resided in his own house, No. 26 High Street. This gentleman took a very deep interest in the affairs of the Burgh of Paisley, and had the welfare of the community sincerely at heart. During his time of office Lord Cochran, a nobleman of great wealth, and who had been purchasing all the property in Renfrewshire that came into the market, acquired, in August, 1553, the barony and lordship of Paisley that had belonged to the Earl of Abercorn. Lord Cochran had made application to Exchequer to complete his titles to the barony which included the superiority of the burgh of Paisley, and the Council being advised by the Bailie that the rights and liberties of the community might be infringed,

commissioned and sent Baillie Spreull to Edinburgh in February, 1656, to watch the proceedings of Lord Cochran, and protect the rights of the community.

“The business could not have been entrusted to better hands than those of Bailie Spreull. He procured the loan of the draft signature that Lord Cochran was prosecuting, and accordingly held consultation with the town’s advocates, Sir John Gilmour and Mr. James Dalrymple. These advocates found that Lord Cochran had engrossed in the signature the haill town of Paisleye, with all its tenements, mansions, yards, lands, commones, and commounties, moss of Pasleye, fairs, mercats, thoils, customs, teinds, making of proveist, baillies, officers, and changing of them when need beis, with the lands of Seedhill, Hutthead, Hillhead, etc. It was considered at the consultation that the signature infringed on the privileges of the town, and the advocates drew up very valid reasons against the passing of the signature. A copy of these reasons was delivered to each of the Judges of Exchequer and the Commonwealth’s advocates.

“Bailie Spreull reported to the Council the proceedings he had taken in Edinburgh, and produced a copy of Lord Cochran’s signature and the reasons lodged against it ; and the Council approved of his diligence, and expressed their gratitude for the

great trouble he had undertaken on behalf of the community.

"On 1st July, 1656, the Council again sent Bailie Spreull to Edinburgh to oppose Lord Cochran's new gift, and establish the rights and liberties of the burgh." It was subsequently agreed to submit the matters in dispute to arbitration. The arbitrators having decided against the signature, Lord Cochran and the town of Paisley entered into a contract on 3rd May, 1658, whereby the latter obtained all the privileges for which they had contended.

"Bailie Spreull, the subject of our sketch, was the principal party in carrying through the above proceedings, and is, therefore, entitled to all the credit of securing the rights and liberties of the community of Paisley from the grasping powers of the richest and most powerful man that had appeared in Renfrewshire since the days of the feudal strifes which disturbed the country for a century.

"A person who could boldly prosecute the civil liberties of his native town, over which he so worthily presided, against encroachments of the most powerful nobleman in the country, was a likely person to maintain religious liberty in the days of the severe trials of the faithful Covenanters. During the Prelatic persecution of the Presbyterian Church, which continued upwards of a quarter of a century, from the restoration of King Charles II. in 1660 till the abdication of

his brother the Duke of York, afterwards King James VII., in 1687, Bailie John Spreull was made an early victim, and he and his family suffered the greatest persecution of all the families in Renfrewshire.

“In 1662 the Parliament of which John, Earl of Middleton was Lord High Commissioner, a most violent and arrogant man, indecent in his manners, and tyrannical in his measures, appointed a secret committee to pick out the persons and fix the sums in which they were to be fined ; and on the list being presented to Parliament it was approved, and the fine imposed without any charge of crime, enquiry made of evidence led of the parties' guilt. The aggregate of the fines amounted to £117,353 6s. 8d. Scots, and the quota imposed on John Spreull, bailie in Paisley, was £360, notwithstanding he had previously suffered for refusing the Tender.

“Bailie Spreull was afterwards prosecuted for refusing to take the declaration, and to relieve himself from the cruel punishments which were inflicted on persons refusing to wrong their conscience, he like many others similarly situated left his native country. On General Dalziel coming to Kilmarnock in 1667 he sent a party of soldiers to Paisley to apprehend Bailie Spreull, but not finding him, became exasperated and threatened to roast or shoot his second son John, unless he discovered the place of refuge of his father.”

On 25th April 1672 a charter was granted by William Greenlees and Robert Pasley bailies, and council of the said burgh to John Spreull senior merchant, burgess of Paisley of all and whole that our garden lying on the south side of the Kings public way of the foresaid burgh immediately behind the march of the meal market, between the tenement of the said John Spreull, on the east, the burn called St. Mirrin's burn, on the south, the garden of Robert Alexander of Blackhouse on the west, and containing in length from the said march toward the burn nineteen perches, one ell, the fourth part and one half of one ell of land, with a place in the Common and the Moss rowm. The price of the garden was 520 merks scots money, for which a separate special receipt and discharge dated 18th May 1672 was granted by the Town Council to bailie Spreull and his cautioners John Snodgrass maltman, and Robert Alexander, merchant (Mrs. Spreull's brother) were also thereby discharged. The next event which occurred in the Bailie's family was the marriage of his eldest son

James Spreull, apothecary in Paisley, which happened on 21st January, 1674, with his relative, Ann Spreull, daughter of Mr. John Spreull, writer in Glasgow, formerly town clerk of that burgh.

In the marriage contract to which the male parents of each side were parties, Bailie Spreull conveyed

to the young couple all and haill ye back half of the said tenement of land including therein the haill back houses high and laigh that ar on the west side of the said close with the equal and undevydyt half of the foresaid haill yard with free ish and entrie thereto, and haill partments thereof. The contract was written by John Spreull, son lawful to the said John Spreull. These back houses conveyed by the father to the son have all the appearance of having been erected during the ownership of Master Andro Knox in 1594, with only a few alteration on some of the windows. On 30th January, 1679, James Spreull granted an heritable bond over his portion of the property for 1100 merks in favour of John Spreull and Janet Alexander his father and mother, and on their decease to Lillias and Catherine Spreull their daughters but under the burden of payment by his sisters to James and Alexander his brothers-in-law 200 merks, to Margaret Spreull, daughter lawful of John 100 merks, and to his own two daughters Elizabeth and Janet 200 merks.

James Spreull was in arms at the battle of Bothwell Bridge, fought on Sunday, 22nd June, 1679, along with his two cousins, John Spreull, writer in Glasgow, and John Spreull, merchant in Glasgow.

In the month of May 1683 the bailies and Council of Paisley as representing the community of Paisley were indicted to appear before the Lords

of Justiciary at Glasgow on the 12th and 13th June following for resetting of James Spreull, Heu Fulton, and Christopher Strang, indwellers of Paisley, after Bothwell Bridge and suffering and permitting them to have the liberty and priveleges of his Majesty's free lieges, within the burgh and aiding and abetting them in meat, drink, armour, and ammunition.

The members of Council being asked whether it sould be ane towne's business and towne's purse to bear and sustaine the expenses, they all in one voice have concludit and ordainit that whatever expenses imprisonment or fine the baillies or any of the counceill sall happen to sustain through the said indyctment, during their abode in Glasgow, for the said cause that the same shall be paid furth of the towne's readiest rents and duties. And have ordainit the treasurer to advance money to the bailies and counceill for defraying their expenses during their abode in Glasgow, and their expenses of imprisonment and fying if any sall happen to be. And the treasurer to give in ane particular account of his disbursement, which shall be answered to him on demand after their return from Glasgow. And for the effect foresaid they have appointed William Fyfe and the Clerk to go to Glasgow and make moyan with the bishop to be the towne's friend before the day of compearance, and to pay

the horse hire and expences they sall happen to disburse and pay in said affair and their pains therein.

On 8th June 1683 the Council concludit that there be ane precept drawn upon the theasur for advancing to the bailies and counsell of the soun of two hundred pundis Scots money and appointed four geanzies of Gold, to be taen out of the common kist, partyly for defraying the expences at Glasgow employing advocates and partly for complimenting the clerk of the circuit court, and making of necessary moyan therewith, in order to bring off and assolyze the twon for the indytment given them for the alleged conversing with, aiding, and abaiting the rebels at Bothwell Bridge.

The secret influence and bribery proposed by the Council to be resorted to must have been successful because there is no report made of the Bailies and Council having been punished under the indictment.

On 5th May, 1684, a Proclamation by King Charles II. with a list of fugitives for rebellion and treasonable crimes was published, and in that list will be found the name of James Spreull, apothecary in Paisley.

James Spreull had issue, Elizabeth and

Janet, born 1675, who married James Shortridge, born 1675, son of Adam Shortridge and Janet Robison. She had issue, Margaret, Janet, James, Ann and

John Shortridge, born 1711, died 1778; married 1746 Hannah Park, daughter of William Park of Paisley. John inherited the Spreull dislike to the Stewart race. He was one of the Glasgow Volunteers, and fought at the battle of Falkirk in 1745. In 1772 he was a Bailie of Glasgow. In 1761 he built Shortridge's Land, a tenement at the north-west corner of Dunlop Street, and next the Buck's Head. This bustling old magistrate was a great improver of Argyle Street. He built the land just mentioned on speculation, but with an apparently profound knowledge of the queerish habits of the burghers within the old city, he laudably resolved to introduce a code of rules and regulations, reformatory thereof within the extensive jurisdiction of his own four-storey land in the new town. His zeal took effect in the new title deeds granted by him to purchasers.

It is rather instructive to read the worthy man's views on Reformation, guided as he seems to have been by the excellent principle that prevention is better than cure. For example, it is solemnly provided by Bailie John Shortridge that people are not to fix any boards or boxes without the kitchen windows either for throwing out of water or any nastiness, or dropping of bottles, the fowl water being to be conveyed from the kitchen in the said tenement by a lead pipe. No nastiness or water

shall be thrown out at any of the windows nor shall any carpets or floorcloths be shaken or cleaned over any of the fore windows looking to Argyle Street, but shall be cleaned over the pass windows under the penalty of five shillings for each transgression. The dung or fulzie to be made in the tenement is to be carried to the middenstead belonging to the land, and to be laid down thereon, but it was then to become the exclusive property of the Bailie who on his part undertakes to keep the midden decent, by carrying away the contents four times each year or oftener if needful.

Perhaps this was the first time that such prohibitions had appeared in Glasgow title deeds, and the catalogue evinces considerable ingenuity.

John Shortridge had issue—

William, who became a partner in the well-known firm of Todd, Shortridge & Co. He married first Elizabeth Yuille of the Darleith family and had issue :

John, born 1786.

Amelia.

Hannah.

George.

Margaret.

William.

He married, second, Mary Leitch in 1800, by whom he had a daughter Christina, born 1802,

James, born 1760, died 1824 ; married Margaret McCall, of whom hereafter.

Janet, married John Smith of Craigend, and had issue :

Archibald.

John.

James.

Hannah, married Andrew Ranken, and had issue :

Euphemia.

Janet.

Hannah.

Mary.

Amelia.

Catherine.

Andrew.

Isabella.

Hannah married James Black, and had issue :

James.

John.

William.

Mary Ann.

Jean.

Hannah married William Muir :

Catherine.

Mary.

Marion.

"Bailie John Shortridge on his death left the bulk of his property to his eldest son William. The second son, James, however, was by no means forgotten, nor was the good and honourable name of Spreull to be allowed to sink into oblivion."

The descendants of Bailie John Spreull of Paisley have been traced thus far through his eldest son, James Spreull, apothecary in Paisley. It is now necessary to return to his second son, John.

John Spreull, the second son of Bailie John Spreull, was born in 1646 and died in 1722. He was a merchant and apothecary in Glasgow.

Owing to the persecutions and trials he endured, culminating in his long imprisonment in the Bass Rock, he became known as "Bass John." A full account of his arrest, torture, trial, and imprisonment has been given by Wodrow in his *History of the Suffering of the Church of Scotland*, and is inserted here. Wodrow seems to have obtained some of his information direct from Bass John, as the manuscript in the latter's hand plainly shows. He assumed as crest a palm (? pomegranate) tree held down by a weight on either side, with the motto "Sub pondere cresco," symbolic of his spiritual and material advancement under the burdens of persecution and confiscation.



'BASS' JOHN SPREULL.

From the Painting by Sir Godfrey Kneller.

Extract from the *History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland*, by Robt. Wodrow, Minister of the Gospel at Eastwood. Vol. II., p. 165. Published at Edinburgh, 1722.

I shall end this Section with an Account of the Process against John Spreul, Apothecary in Glasgow, who was before the Justiciary June this Year, and give it at some length both because it was after Torture and made no little Noise ; and I have distinct and attested Accounts of it, and he continued more than six years a close Prisoner after Torture. This Gentleman is yet alive after all his sore Sufferings, and I know his Modesty will not allow me to give that Character of him which he deserves, and therefor I shall only relate his Sufferings as they stand in the publick Records, intermixing some other Hints which I have well vouched.

Mr Spreul's Troubles began very soon after Pentland. His Father John Spreul Merchant in Paisley, was fined by Middleton, altho he had suffered for his refusing the Tender ; he paid the one half of his Fine and being prosecuted for the other, or rather his refusing the Declaration, he was forced with many other worthy Persons to abscond. When General Dalziel came, as we have heard, to Kilmarnock 1667, a Party of Soldiers were sent to Paisley, and took Mr Spreul, whose Sufferings I am

now relating, Prisoner merely because he would not discover where his father was. At that Time after many terrible Threatenings of being shot to Death, roasted at a Fire, and the like, and some short Confinement, he was dismissed.

In the Year 1677, he was with Aikenhead and many other Gentlemen, cited before a Court in Glasgow, of which some Account has been already given. Finding that Severity was designed against all that compeared, Mr Spreul absented, and was with several other worthy Persons denounced and inter-communed, tho nothing was laid to their Charge but mere Nonconformity.

This obliged him to quit his House and Shop, and go abroad, sometimes to Holland, France, and Ireland, and merchandise. He was in Ireland with his Uncle Mr James Alexander in May 1679, and came over to Scotland after the Scuffle at Drumclog in June, and went to his House at Crawforddyke, where understanding the Conduct of the West Country Army, he had no Freedom to joyn them, tho his own Brother James Spreul, and two Cousins John Spreul Writer and John Spreul Merchant in Glasgow were with them in Arms. His Business obliged him to be with some in that Army, but he never joyned them.

After the Defeat at Bothwell he absconded again, however his Wife and Family was turned out of his



CREST AND ARMORIAL BEARINGS OF
'BASS' JOHN SPREULL.

House and Shop, and all the Moveables secured. Within a little he retired to Holland, and stayed there some time, where hearing of the continued Persecution in Scotland and growing Divisions among the Sufferers, he came home 1680, with a design to bring his Wife and Family to Rotterdam.

When lurking at Edinburgh November 12, a severe search was made for Mr Cargil and his Followers, and Mr Spreul was apprehended by Major Johnstoun when in his bed, and his Goods which he had brought from Holland seized by the Party, tho none of them were prohibited. He was carried first to the General, and then to the Guard at the Abbay, where Mr Skene and Archibald Stuart were Prisoners ; with whom he was carried up to the Tolbooth next Day about Nine of the Clock when the Council was convened.

By the Council Registers we have seen he was examined November 13, but his Answers are not insert, and therefore I shall give the Substance of what passed as far as Mr Spreul could remember. He was interrogate, Were you at the Killing of the Archbishop ? Ans. I was in Ireland at that Time. Quest. Was it Murder ? Ans. I know not but by Hearsay, that he is dead, and cannot judge other Mens Actions upon Hearsay. I am no Judge, but in my discreitive Judgment I would not have done it, and cannot approve it. He was again urged ; but

do you not think it was Murder ? Ans. Excuse me from going any further I scruple to condemn what I cannot approve, seeing there may be a righteous Judgment of God, where there is a sinful Hand of Man, and I may admire and adore the one when I tremble at the other. Quest. Were you at Drumclog ? Ans. I was at Dublin then. Quest. Did you know nothing of the Rebels rising in Arms when in Design ? Ans. No ; the first Time I heard of it was in coming from Dublin to Belfast in my way Home, where I heard that Claverhouse was resisted by the Country People at Drumclog. Quest. Was not that Rebellion ? Ans. I think not ; for I own the Freedom of Preaching the Gospel, and I hear what they did was only in self Defence. Quest. Were you at Bothwell with the Rebels ? Ans. After my return from Ireland I was at Hamiltoun seeking in Money, and clearing Counts with my Customers, so I went through part of the West Country Army, and spoke with some there, since the King's High Way was as free to me as to other Men ; but I neither joyned them as Commander, Trooper nor Soldier. Quest. Was that Rising Rebellion ? Ans. I will not call it Rebellion. I think it was a providential Necessity put on them for their own Safety, after Drumclog. This Confession of his he was urged to subscribe, but absolutely refused it. By the Registers I find, ' Mr Spreul

before the Council November 15, confesseth he was in Company with Mr Cargil in Edinburgh, but will not discover in what House,' and adds 'That there was nothing twixt them but Salutations.'

Mr Spreul having come from Ireland in the time of Bothwel, and being just now come from Holland, and owning he had been in company with Mr Cargil, the Managers were of Opinion, that he could give them more Information ; and now being got into the inhumane way of putting People to the Torture, and A. Stuart being examined this way, November 15—that same day the Council pass the following Act, 'The Lords of His Majesty's Privy Council having Good Reason to believe, That there is a Principle of murdering his Majesty, and those under him, for doing his Majesty Service, and a design of subverting the Government of Church and State, entertained and carried on by the Fanaticks and particularly by Mr Donald Cargil, Mr Robert Macwaird, and others their Complices, and that John Spreul and Robert Hamilton have been in Accession thereunto ordain them to be subjected to the Torture, upon such Interrogatories as relate to these Three Points. 1. By what Reason and Means that murdering Principle is taught and carried on ; who were accessory to the Contrivance of Murdering ; who were to be murdered ; and also as to the Archbishop of St. Andrews' Murder.

2. If there was any new Rebellion intended ; by what Means it was to be carried on ; who were to bring Home the Arms ; if any be brought or bought, and by whom, who were the Contrivers and Promoters of the late Rebellion at Bothwell Bridge.

3. Who were their Correspondents Abroad and at Home, particularly at London, or elsewhere ; what they know of bringing Home or dispersing seditious Pamphlets, and such other Particulars as relate to those Generals ; And give full Power and Commission to the Earls of Argyle, Linlithgow, Perth and Queensberry Treasurer-Depute, Register, Advocate, Justice Clerk, General Dalziel, Lord Collingtoun, and Haddo, to call and examine the said Persons in Torture, upon the said Interrogatories, and such other as they shall find pertinent upon the said Heads, and report.'

I find no Report in the Council-books, because nothing was expiscate by Torture, which was not before acknowledged. Indeed there was nothing in this Plot and murdering Design, but imaginary Fears, and therefor I shall from other papers, give some Account of this Torture, the Questions proposed, and Answers given by Mr. Spreul as far as his Memory could serve him afterwards to write down.

The Lord Haltoun was Preses of this Committee and the Duke of York, and many others were present.

The Preses told Mr Spreul That if he would not make a more ample Confession than he had done and sign it, he behoved to underly the Torture. Mr Spreul said, 'He had been very ingenuous before the Council, and would go no further that they could not subject him to Torture according to Law; but if they would go on, he protested that his Torture was without yea, against all Law; that what was extorted from him under the Torture against himself or any others, he would resile from it, and it ought not to militate against him or any others; and yet he declared his Hopes, God would not leave him so far, as to accuse himself or others under the Extremity of Pain.' Then the Hangman put his foot in the Instrument called the Boot, and at every Query put to him, gave Five Strokes or thereby upon the Wedges. The Queries were, Whether he knew anything of a Plot to blow up the Abbay, and Duke of York? who was in the Plot and where Mr Cargil was, and if he would subscribe his Confession before the Council? To these he declared his absolute and utter ignorance, and adhered to his refusal to subscribe. When nothing could be expiscate by this, they ordered the old Boot to be brought, alledging this new one used by the Hangman was not so good as the old, and accordingly it was brought, and he underwent the Torture a second time, and adhered to what he had before said.

General Dalziel complained at the second Torture, That the Hangman did not strike strongly enough upon the Wedges ; he said, he struck with all his Strength, and offered the General the Mall to do it himself. Mr Spreul was very firm, and wonderfully supported, to his own Feeling in Body and Spirit during the Torture. When it was over he was carried to Prison on a Soldier's Back, where he was refused the benefit of a Surgeon ; but the Lord blessed so the Means he himself used that in a little Time he recovered pretty well. That same Day his Wife came to Edinburgh, but by no means could she be allowed Access to him, to help him after his Torture.

When he was recovered, the Advocate sent him an Indictment, and in March this Year, he was before the Justiciary ; but the Advocate's Witnesses were not ready, and so the Process was delayed. Under this Dilature, new Witnesses were got in from the West Country and Mr Spreul was brought before some Counsellors, and the Witnesses confronted with him. Mr Spreul protested against examining Witnesses extrajudicially, and not before his Judges and the Assize and took Instruments in the Clerk's Hand. Mean while, he was informed by one present, that some of the witnesses were threatened, and others of them had large Promises given them to bear Testimony against him. Yet,



THE BOOT.

From book by J. Anderson.

after all, the Lords themselves began to think the Probation would not reach his life ; but the Duke of York very much pressed their going on, alledging they were at much Pains about poor Country People, but Mr Spreul was more dangerous than five hundred of them.

In March, an Incident fell in which brought Mr Spreul to some more Trouble before his Trial, and it deserves a room here. John Murray a Sailor was sentenced to die for his being at a Conventicle in Arms as we shall hear. A good many had been already executed chiefly at the Duke of York's Instigation, and some of the Managers were willing to show this Man some Favour. Accordingly several Draughts of a Petition were proposed to him, which if he would sign the Council would procure him a Reprieve. He refused them all as what he thought imported a receding from his Principles. At length Sir William Paterson calling Mr Spreul, who was in the same room of the Prison with John Murray, to another, told him the Council inclined to spare Murray, and entreated him to deal with him to sign any Petition and he would present it. Mr Spreul was not willing to engage much in this Matter, lest he should be mistaken and misrepresented ; and John Murray would not direct any Petition to the Duke of York : However at length he drew a Declaration with a petitory.

Clause added to it, which satisfied John, and he signed it.

It was directed to the Council and ran : ' Whereas I am sadly misrepresented to your Lordships, as if I were a Man of King-killing Principles, I declare I would kill no Man whatsoever but upon Self-defence, which the Law of God and Nature allows : I own the free Preaching of the Gospel, whether in the Fields or Houses, seeing tis written, Without Faith 'tis impossible to please God, and Faith cometh by Hearing. I also own Jesus Christ as the only Head of his own Church, and King of Saints, and disown all others pretending, thereunto. May it therefore please your Lordships to recal the Sentence against me, as if I were of dangerous and King-killing Principles, lest you bring innocent Blood upon your own Heads, this City and Inhabitants thereof ; for I declare I am no Papist, and hate and abhor all those Jesuitical bloody, and murdering Principles.'

When this Petition was read in Council, John Murray was asked who drew it : With much difficulty he was brought to tell ; and straightway Mr Spreul was called before them and interrogate, if he knew anything about a Petition by John Murray. He asked a sight of it, and owned it his Writ, desired it might be read before him, and that he might know what was objected against it ; and acknow-

ledged he had drawn it at the Clerk's earnest Desire, and again intreated it might be read, that he might know what they quarrelled in it. This was not done, but the Duke of York rose up, and said with a frown Sir would you kill the King? After a pause Mr Spreul, directing himself to the Chancellor, said, My Lord, I bless God I am no Papist, I lothe and abhor all those Jesuitical bloody and murdering Principles; neither my Parents nor the Ministers I heard ever taught me such Principles. A great Silence followed, and many expected that Mr Spreul should have been sent to the Irons immediately. In a little the Chancellor asked Mr Spreul if he had been at Bothwel, and some other Questions relative thereto; which the Pannel declined giving answers to, since he was before the Justiciary. There was not one word more of the Petition; but 'tis probable, what he spoke at this Time made his Prosecution the more violent before the Justiciary, of which I now come to give Account from the Registers.

March 2. John Spreul, Apothecary in Glasgow, is indicted before the Justiciary for Treason and Rebellion, and the Lords continue his Process until June next. Upon the 6 of June I find him in the Pannel, and the Lords desert the Diet simpliciter; whether it was from some Informality in the Libel, or what was the Reason, I cannot tell, but upon

the 10 of June, Mr Spreul is brought again before the Justiciary, and the Advocate produces an Act of Council, dated June 9, ordering him to pursue a Forfeiture against the said Mr Spreul ; and accordingly present an Indictment of Treason and Rebellion, for corresponding and being present with the Rebels at Bothwel. It runs in the common form which is insert above, and so needs not be repeated here. Only I notice, that he is charged ' with keeping Company and corresponding with Mr John Welsh and Mr Samuel Arnot, the bloody and sacrilegious Murderers of the late Archbishop of St Andrews ' ; which is an arrant Falsehood, those two Ministers having had no Share in that Fact.

The Pannel's Advocates are Sir George Lockhart, Mr Walter Pringle, Mr James Deas, Mr Alexander Swinton, and Mr David Thoirs.

Wodrow then in some detail sets out the legal argument.

After these Debates, the Lords, by their Interlocutor, ' find the Dittay relevant, and remit the Probation to an Assize, and repel the Defence founded upon the Torture, in respect the Commission of Council did not warrant the Pannel to have been questioned upon any of the Crimes mentioned in the Dittay, and continues the said Action till the Thirteenth Instant.'

Upon the 13 there was more legal argument—

The Lords having considered this, with the former Debate, 'find no new Matter alledged for the Pannel, and adhere to their former Interlocutor, and remit the Dittay to an Assize.' Their Names I omit for Brevity; after they are lawfully sworn, and the Advocate adduces his Witnesses.

John Laing, Chirurgeon in Hamiltoun, depones he was with the Pannel in June 1679, in Hamiltoun, about fitting Accounts twixt them, according to an appointment made before the Pannel went to Ireland: that not being able to end them, the Pannel took his Horse, and rode away with Pistols and Holsters towards Glasgow, and that he used to see the Pannel before the Rebellion ride with Pistols, and that no Discourse passed 'twixt them as to the Rebels then in Arms, and this was about Eight Days before the Engagement, and the Pannel said he was come straight from Ireland.

David Caldwell in Monkland is next adduced. Mr. Pringle objects against him.

After long Debate, the Lords repel the Objections founded upon the Depositions taken by Order of Council, in regard they do not allow his Majesty's Advocate to adduce them as a Probation and ordain the Witnesses to be received.

Then David Caldwell depones, he thinks he saw the Pannel riding in Arms half a Mile from Hamiltoun, the Friday before the Defeat at Bothwell; that

there were some Men with him whom he knew not to be Rebels, but some of them had Arms ; that he never saw the Pannel before that he was a half a Mile from the Body of the Rebels ; that he does not know if the Pannel was repute one of the Rebels ; that he met the Pannel in the High-way at the Moderwell, in the Way from Hamiltoun to Edinburgh ; that he never saw the Pannel since, but he thinks he is the Man he saw there ; that he knew none in Company with the Pannel, except one Russel, whom he saw frequently in Company with the Rebels.

James Hamilton in Hamiltoun, called Nepos, depones, he saw Mr Spreul in June 1679, going alone through Hamiltoun to an Apothecary's Shop, with a walking Sword about him ; that he never heard him repute among the Rebels at that Time.

James Miller in Millheugh depones, in June 1679, he saw one designed Mr Spreul riding with Arms on a gray Horse, up to the Rebels in Hamiltoun-muir ; that the Pannel is like the Man designed Mr Spreul, but dare not depone he is he ; that he never heard that after that Mr. Spreul was among the Rebels.

John Spreul, Writer in Glasgow, depones, that he, being in Company with the Rebels, met the Pannel and another in his Company upon the Road, half a Mile from the Haggs some Days before Bothwel ; that he did not see the Pannel in Company with

the Rebels in Hamiltoun-muir, nor any where else.

John Aird, Merchant in Glasgow, depones, that he and the Pannel, with another Woman, were in Company in the Deponent's House at Glasgow with Mr John Welsh. A vast number of other Witnesses are sworn, but they have nothing in their Depositions worth while—

When the Probation by Witnesses was ended, the Advocate, for further Probation, adduced the above-mentioned alledged Confession in presence of Council. Sir George Lockhart alledged for the Pannel, that the pretended Confession before the Council could not be repeated as a Mean of Probation in this Process, because that 'tis not signed by the Pannel, but, when it was offered to him, was disowned and disclaimed by him, and what he would not sign; that 'tis most unreasonable that a Confession, not acquiesced unto by the Pannel, and drawn up *ex post facto*, and after a long Interval of Time, should be made to militate against him, by any Witnesses whatsoever, and the Reason is because a Confession, importing what concerns a Man's Life or Fortune may be mistaken by Witnesses as to the Tenor, and Phrases, and Manner of Expression, all which may make a vast Difference as to the Meaning and Import of such a Confession; and nothing can be of worse Consequence in Criminals

than to lay down this Foundation, that what is deponed by Witnesses may be taken for a Man's own Confession, especially *ex post facto*, and after a long Interval of Time ; yea, tho' the said Confession were signed by the Pannel, yet being extrajudicial, and not *coram competente judice* as to the Process and Crime, it cannot be sustained ; since such extrajudicial Confessions, even in Writing, and incontinently taken, are in Law revocable, and *fidem non faciunt in processu criminali*, as appears from Matthaeus de Crim., p. 370, Clarus, Quaest. 54, and the most that such Confessions can operate is only *indicium ad torturem*, which the Pannel has endured, and was subjected to it, because he refused to own the said pretended Confession. Further, according to the Practice of all Nations, 'tis statuted, Act 90. Parl. II, Jam. VI., that all Writs and Documents used in Probation, shall be taken in face of the Inquest, and consequently before the Judges competent, whereas this Confession was *extra locum juris*, and the Privy Council are not proper Judges in this Process. All which Defences the Pannel propounds, as separatim relevant.

His Majesty's Advocate replies, That the Pannel's not signing the Confession, says nothing, because it was read to him, and it shall be proven that he could not disown the Confession ; and the Pannel's Contumacy cannot be of Use to him, and ought not,

unless one Crime be made to defend another ; and the constant Custom has, upon good Reason, made unsigned Confessions valid ; and Skene, Stuart, and others died upon such Confessions : That the Confession was written and read *ex incontinenti* to the Pannel ; and it is offered to be proven that he, being advertised of his Danger, and the Articles read one by one, acquiesced in them all, except that he would not say he was in the Rebellion ; and *exceptio firmat regulam*. He adds, That following the merciful Example of the King his Master, and being unwilling to stretch any debatable Point, he hath only adduced this Confession against the Pannel as an Adminicle, and a Presumption joyned with other pregnant Grounds, and insists, That it is a very strong Argument ; for who can know a Man's Accession so well as himself ? Writs may be forged, Witnesses may be false, but a Man will never confess falsely to his own Hurt : And therefore a Confession *coram judice incompetente* is valid, unless the Confessor can shew what made him err. Mascard Conclus. 352, No. 2. Clarus Quaest. 55, No. 40. 'Tis proven that he was upon the Spot, and conversed with the Rebels ; and all that is wanting is, Whether it was *animo delinquendi*. And certainly his own Confession must be owned the most solid Evidence of this. To which it may be added, That the Pannel is universally known to be of these Principles which

led Men to Bothwel-bridge, and to be the great Ringleader there, and that he will not yet call it a Rebellion : And how can it once be thought, that he wished so well to that Party, trafficked so much for them, was so oft with them, and will not yet disown it, to the Hazard of his Life, being proved to have been there in Arms, and confessed it, who will think, that in *materia verisimili*, that the Confession should not operate against him, and adminiculate, as said is ?

Sir George Lockhart duplies, that the Pannel's Procurators are not straitned by the Instances of Skene and other Traitors, which do not concern the Point in Hand ; yea, they retort these Instances in so far as they were sisted before the Justices, and did repeat their Confessions before them and the Inquest, and ran to the highest Transports of Fury and Treason, disowning the King and his Judges, and were in *crimine flagrante*, and owning and committing Treason in face of the Court. He further asserts, there cannot be one Instance given, wherever a Confession, importing Forfeiture of Life and Estate, not signed by the Person, or Judge, when he cannot write, but offered to be proved by Depositions of Witnesses, was ever heard of before, or sustained ; and contends, this is reprobate by the general Principles of Law, and the Statutes of the Kingdom in *judicio civili*, and pecuniary Matters in which

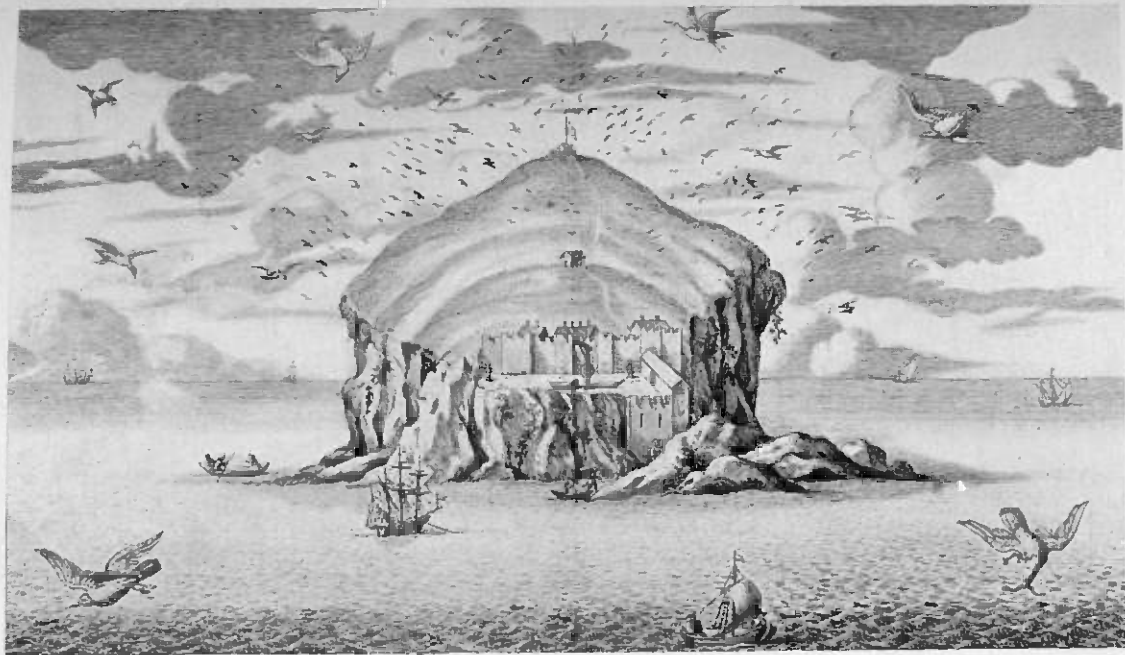
nuda emissio verborum will not be admitted to be proven by Deposition of Witnesses, in a Sum of an Hundred Pounds Scots, and can it be admitted in a Matter of Life and Fortune? He adds, that 'tis notour, That a pretended judicial Confession before the Lords of Session, in the Case of Osburn and Buchanan, tho' produced under the Clerk's Hand, was not sustained to be binding in a Matter of Debt, because not subscribed by the Party : and it would be a strange Stretch indeed if the Subscription of a Clerk, or Deposition of Witnesses, should be admitted in a matter of this Importance, when cast as to the meanest pecuniary Matters : In short, what is advanced, that extrajudicial Confessions, *coram iudice incompetente*, may be adduced in *modum adminiculi*, *nisi doceatur de errore*, comes not at all up to this Case, because that is only true, where *constat et apparet de veritate actus*, by Production of the Confession it self ; in which Case 'tis acknowledged, that both in judicial and extrajudicial Confessions, if the Party be able *docere de errore*, he may retract, and be heard against the Confession ; but here the Point debated is, that the Confession *de natura sua requirit scripturam*, which is not in this Case, and is not probable by Witnesses : And as to the Concurrence and qualifications of the other Adminicles insisted on by his Majesty's Advocate, they are neither proper to be debated nor answered

hoc loco, and may be represented to the Inquest, where they shall be sufficiently taken off. Mr. David Thoirs adds, The Decision of the Court in the Case of Robertoun Soldier, who having confest a murder before the Three Commissioners of the Justiciary, the Advocate, and Clerk, the Court refused to sustain the Confession either as *plena*, or *sempilena probatio*, in respect it was not taken by Four of the Justices, who are only a *Quorum pro tribunali sedentes*.

The Lords having considered this Part of the Debate, 'refuse to sustain the Confession to be proved by Witnesses, as a Mean of Probation either plenary or adminiculate.'

Then the Advocate moved the Pannel might be interrogated, If he thinks the being at Bothwel-bridge, Rebellion. The Pannel answers, That he conceives that he is not obliged to answer, because it is not the Crime libelled, and he may be as well interrogated upon any Point of Treason. The Lords having interrogate the Pannel, if he acknowledged the Rising at Bothwel to be a Rebellion: he answered, that was no Part of the Libel, and his After-life should witness him to be both a good Subject and good Christian. The Advocate closed his Probation, and protests for an Assize of Error, in case the Inquest assoillie the Pannel.

The Lords ordain the Assize to inclose, and return



THE BASS ROCK.

their Verdict to Morrow ; which they did, and when opened, was as follows : ' The Assize having considered the Depositions of the haill Witnesses led against John Spreul, *una voca* find nothing proven of the Crimes contained in the Libel, which may make him guilty.'

NEIL STEVENSON *Chanc.*

Whereupon the Pannel and his Procurators take Instruments, and crave he may be liberate: But his Majesty's Advocate produced an Act of Council, Edinburgh, June 14, 1681: ' The Council give Order and Warrant to the Justices, notwithstanding of any Verdict or Sentence, upon the criminal Dittay lately pursued against John Spreul, to detain him in Prison until he be examined upon several other Points they have to lay to his Charge.'

PAT. MENZIES.

And so Mr Spreul was sent back again to Prison. I have given the fuller Account of this Process, and as distinct a Detail of the Reasonings as I could form, because I was of Opinion, the Debates which fell in this Case, are in many Branches of them, upon Heads common to several other Sufferers in this Period ; and the Pleading of such noted Lawiers on both Hands, will afford no small Light to the Cases of Torture, of extrajudicial Confession, the Refusal to sign Confessions, and other points not uncommon in this Period. Besides the Weight of

the Case of Torture it self, which deserves a Room here, the Method of treating Pannels, and the Pains used to make every thing turn to their Disadvantage, with the Vigour now used in the Prosecutions, will appear ; and if such Efforts were made in this Process, when so many able Lawiers were Procurators for the Pannel, we may easily guess what sad work was in the more ordinary Processes, with poor ignorant Country People.

Upon the 14 of July, I find Mr. Spreul, and William Lin Writer in Edinburgh, brought before the Privy Council, for being present at Field-conventicles ; and they are found guilty of hearing Presbyterian Ministers preach, when some of the Hearers were without Doors, as likewise of Reset and Converse with intercommuned Persons. The Matter was referred to their Oaths, which they refusing, are found guilty. Mr Spreull was out of the kingdom at the Times libelled as to Conventicles ; and each of them is fined in Five hundred Pounds Sterling, and sent to the Bass. Mr Spreul lay Six Years in the Bass, and we shall again meet with him there after this ; and, from his long continuance in that Place, he has yet the Compellation of ' Bass ' John Spreul, whereof he needs not be ashamed.

The Reader has had already the Case of John Spreul, with the Debates upon his Torture, at great length. In May this Year an Order is granted to

liberate him. Favours were now shown to the Prisoners ; and after near Seven Years Imprisonment, Mr Spreul sent a Petition to the Council, which follows from the Original.

‘ Whereas ’tis not unknown to your Lordships, how that your Lordships Petitioner, after his first Imprisonment, was put to the Extremity of the Torture Two several Times, the which having sustained, was thereby assolied by the Laws of this and all other Nations. Thereafter when he was indicted, he was also cleared by the Verdict of the whole Assize, and thereupon assolied by the Lords of the Justiciary ; and at last being libelled before your Lordships by his Majesty’s Advocate, who could prove nothing against him, yet your Lordships being pleased to fine him, and continue his Imprisonment so long, because he had not Freedom to depone upon the Libel, the Reasons wherefore he could not, being not only from Grounds in Law, but especially from Conscience, and his Obligation and Respect to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which are at more length expressed in his Information, together with a Touch at a few of the great Losses he hath sustained both before and since his Imprisonment what by Sea, the great Fire at Glasgow, House and Shop taken from his Wife in his Absence, also by bad Debtors, and through his Imprisonment all is prescribed by Law that’s due him after three Years

past, the Goods taken from him by Major Johnston, and the Death of his Wife, and other great Expenses since his Imprisonment, being these Six Years and Five Months all which he humbly offereth to your Lordships Consideration and Pity.

May it therefore please your Lordships, to grant your Lordships Petitioner Liberty to follow his lawful Calling in his native Country, at least in any other Nation where he may with best Conveniency, not that he petitioneth for his own Banishment and so to be sold as a Slave, the which he would not be ashamed of, for the Gospel's sake, if he be called of the Lord to it but the Liberty of a freeborn Subject is that he humbly begs, at least Liberty a competent Time to see if by Law he can obtain any Thing of his Debtors to maintain himself in Prison, seeing nothing hath been hitherto allowed him out of the Goods taken from him by Major Johnston, neither out of the Treasury.'

May 13, The Council grant the following Act of Liberation: 'The Lords of his Majesty's Privy Council having considered an Address made in behalf of John Spreul Apothecary in Glasgow, now Prisoner in the Isle of the Bass, supplicating for Liberty, in regard of his Majesty's late gracious Proclamation, do hereby give order and Warrant to Charles Maitland Lieutenant-Governor of the Isle of the Bass, to set the said John Spreul at

Liberty, he having found Caution acted in the Books of Council, to appear before the Council once in June next, under the Penalty of one Thousand Pounds Scots Money, in case of Fail'e. Extracted by me COLIN MACKENZIE *Cl. Secr. Concilii.*

When this Order comes to the Bass, Mr Spreul was unwilling to take his Liberty upon any Terms that to him appeared inconsistent with the Truths he was suffering for ; and he apprehended this Order involved him in an Approbation of the Proclamation specified, which he was far from approving. So much he signified to the Governor of the Bass, and continued some Time in Prison, till a letter came over requiring the Governor to set open Doors to him, and tell him he was at Liberty to go, or stay, as he pleased. Whereupon, after so long Imprisonment, he chose to come out under a Protestation against what he took to be wrong in the Orders and Proclamation, and went over to Edinburgh, and waited on the Counsellors, thanked them for allowing him Liberty, and verbally renewed his Protest against the Proclamation and Orders. Thus ended the long Tract of Sufferings this good man was under.

At the time we write of, all the prisons and tol-booths of Scotland were filled to overflowing. It was found necessary to provide more accommodation for the increasing number of delinquents ; and the

Bass, from its proximity to the Capital, its security, and perhaps its dignity as a Castle, was selected as a fitting receptacle for the leading men, and more especially the Presbyterian Ministers. A slight survey of the ruins of the fortress as they now stand in naked desolation is sufficient to corroborate the testimonies of the prisoners, and to show that they had little reason to congratulate themselves on the selection of their Marine Prison: placed near the base of the overhanging precipice, it must have formed a tank or reservoir for the perpetual drippings from above; while it was washed by the spray from the ocean below, and entitled by exposure to the full benefit of the Eastern blasts.

'Bass' John's father, who had been persecuted only less severely than his son, in his letters to the latter, some of which are still preserved, encourages him with Christian cheer and comfort.

It is interesting to recapitulate here the troubles that befell the family about this time. Bass John suffered torture, imprisonment, fine and loss of goods. His father was fined and had to leave the country. His brother James was in arms at Bothwell Bridge and Drumclog, and was proclaimed for rebellion and treasonable crimes. His cousin John, the town clerk, was at Bothwell Bridge and Drumclog and was fined, banished and imprisoned on the

Bass. The son of the last named, another John, was also at Bothwell Bridge and Drumclog.

'Bass' John continued after his release to take a prominent part in public affairs.

During the greater part of William's reign the Scots complained bitterly of the way in which the English Parliament hampered Scottish trade. As one means of pacifying Scotland, the King's Commissioner to the Parliament offered to promote emigration. William Paterson, the founder of the Bank of England, projected the Darien scheme for the colonization of Panama in 1695. The English and Dutch trading companies were jealous of the scheme and they induced William to withhold the privileges he had promised. The scheme therefore ended in widespread ruin. It cost Scotland £400,000 and some of her best blood. 'Bass' John Spreull was one of the largest subscribers to the Darien scheme.

To the jealousy of the English merchants the Scots ascribed their exclusion also from the East India trade. 'Bass' John became one of the adventurers to the amount of £1000 in the Joint Stock of the Company trading to Africa and the Indies, established in 1696. He traded most in pearls of any man in Scotland. He himself writes: "I have dealt in Pearls these forty years and more and yet to this day I could never sell a necklace of fine Scots

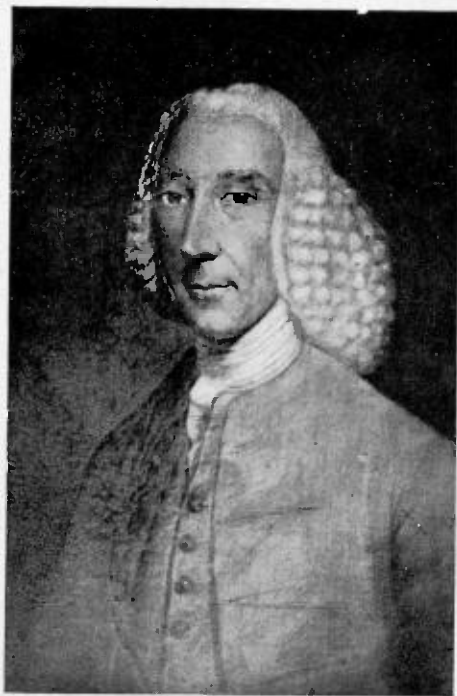
Pearls in Scotland nor yet fine pendants. The generality seeking for Oriental pearl because farther fecht. Yet for commendation of our own Pearl at this very day I can show some of our own Scots Pearl as fine, Lucid and more transparent than any Oriental. Its true that the Oriental can be easier Matcht, Because they are all of a yellow water, yet foreigners covet Scots Pearl."

He had "large conveniences" at Crawfordsdyke for making red herring.

The greater part of his Library, consisting of Greek, Latin and French works and English Divinity, together with some part of his silver plate remained in the possession of his representatives until recently. Fortunately his Bible is still carefully preserved.

In *Reasons against Imposing Prizedg Wines in Scotland contrary to Law before the Barons of the Exchequer*, he concludes :

"My Lord Chief Baron, I am confident Your Lordship's finding this Prizedge Wine such a great Hardship to Scotland, and takes such a care to be informed; and does not precipitat rashly to a sentence against the merchants, but studies wisely and amicably to preserve Peace and Union amongst the Whole of Great Britain, I hope your lordship and this Honourable Counsel shall have the Honour to acquit and discharge the Merchants here as to Prisedge, and discharge it for ever in Scotland,



BAILIE JAMES SPREULL.

which will encourage Trade and stop the Mouths of Enemys, for

My Lord when I go to the Streets, the Jacobites will flock about me and cry out, aha, aha, John Spreull take up Your Union, if Your Lordships determine against the Merchants."

'Bass' John Spreull wrote :

An Accompt Current betwixt Scotland and England.

A representation in reference to a Seat in his Parish Church.

At the Convention held at Edinburgh in March, 1689, the Claim of Rights was drawn up and sent to King William. Bass John was present as a witness when King William and Queen Mary received the Instrument of Government and consented to the Claim of Rights.

'Bass' John Spreull was a Burgess of Perth (1710), Lanark (1692), Paisley (1697), Dunbar (1691), Haddington (1708), Linlithgow (1696), Stirling (1711), Dundee (1692), Brechin (1708), Jedburgh (1702), Selkirk (1704), Renfrew (1711), Montrose (1707), Kinghorne (1705), Dumfries (1712), Kirkcaldy (1709), Ayr (1709).

'Bass' John having married Isobel Clarke, the only child of Andrew Clarke, merchant in Glasgow, and Margaret King his spouse, succeeded to them as

sole heirs of all they had. In which heritage there was a Burial place with a large through stone having the said Andrew Clarke and Margaret King's name upon it, lying in the High Church Yard not far from the great Entry. It is bounded on the west by the Burial place of Thos. Orr, writer, on the east by John Gammel, couper, on the north by James Stark, maltman, and on the south by James Chambers, now by James Dunlop's heirs.

Herein were buried 'Bass' John, his wife and children.

5th Oct., 1738, this was declared to belong to 'Bass' John's son James. On the death of James it became the property of his surviving sisters, and on 15th Jan., 1771, was disposed to John Shortridge. By virtue of a Disposition and Deed, dated 28th February, 1777, and recorded in the Register, 20th February, 1784, these subjects were vested in James Spreull, son of John Shortridge.

By his wife, Isobel Clarke, he had one daughter, Margaret, born 1676, died 1691. He married second, Margaret Wingate (died 1756) in 1696, and had issue: John, died young; John, died young, drowned; James, born 1699, died 1769; Margaret, born 1700, died 1784; Janet, born 1706, died 1772—married Captain Thomas Maxwell, born 1696, died 1749, and had a daughter who died young; Grizel, born 1709, died 1777; Jean, born 1714, died 1719.



MARGARET SPREULL.
DAUGHTER OF 'BASS' JOHN SPREULL.

James died unmarried. He was a Bailie of Glasgow in 1755; Treasurer of the City in 1753. The Ship Bank having been successfully formed a second Bank was formed the same year, and James Spreull was one of the partners. The opening of the Bank was announced in the *Glasgow Courant* of Nov. 5th, 1750. The social name was Cochran, Murdoch & Co., and the name the Glasgow Arms Bank. A copy of a portrait of him is still preserved in the Committee Room of the Glasgow Town's Hospital, and a similar one was recently to be seen in Edinburgh, in the office of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.

James Spreull was a Burgess of Glasgow (1727), Stirling (1713), Kirkcaldy (1712).

A curious entry shows that James Spreull gave £5 and his cousin, John Shortridge, £3 3s. to the Old Glasgow Dancing Assemblies.

Margaret Spreull and her sisters inherited from their father, Bass John, property in the Trongate. This was an antique mansion erected near the end of the seventeenth century. It very much resembled the fine quaint looking mansions formerly to be seen at No. 31 Stockwell—East side near the top. The land on which these premises were built sometime belonged to John Wilson, merchant, and John Scott, baker, thereafter to John Rae, merchant, and was purchased by Bass John Spreull in 1690, by

whom the two barns and outrigs upon it were pulled down, and tenements of land, high and laigh back and fore, with close houses, offices, were built, garden summer house and pertinents. To the east of it stood Hutchesons' Hospital, and from thence to near the Cross the buildings on both sides of Trongate were mean and inconsiderable.

The rent of Spreull's Land then by far the most valuable in the West district, may be taken as a specimen of house rents in 1712. The whole tenement was rented at £674 Scots, or £56 13s. 4d. Sterling, viz : John Spreull's own house and cellars, £10 3s. 4d. ; Lady Glencavon, £9 ; George Stirling, £7 13s. 4d. ; Lady Auchenbrock, £6 13s. 4d. ; James Clelland, £6 ; Lady Craignish, £5 10s. ; John M^cAulley, £4 6s. 8d. ; William Wallace, £3 ; James Chapman, £2 6s. 8d. ; Mrs. Hamilton, £2. At this time there were only 202 shops in the town, and the population about 13,000.

When Bailie John Shortridge and his cousin, Margaret Spreull, then the sole proprietrix of this property were both in old age, she told him that when making provision for his family she wished him to "take care of Will and leave Jamie to me." The tenement in the Trongate therefore was strictly entailed in favour of James, and it was provided that the possessor should always bear the name of Spreull. On the death of Margaret, in 1784,



FAMILY GROUP. BY DAVID ALLAN, 1793.

**Hannah (Park) Shortridge; Margaret (M'Call) Spreull; James Shortridge or Spreull, City Chamberlain;
Helen Spreull; John Spreull; Margaret Spreull.**

James Shortridge succeeded in terms of this arrangement, and assumed the name of Spreull.

James Shortridge or Spreull was City Chamberlain in 1763, and was appointed superintendant of the River in 1798. "The improvements (on the river) are so far completed by Mr. Spreull that vessels drawing 9 foot 6 inches water can come up to the Broomielaw at an ordinary Spring tide. The river is 140 foot wide at the west end of the Broomielaw, it is at Dumbarton 2 miles broad."

Among the gentlemen bowlers of those days was James Spreull, Esq. He was also Captain of the Glasgow Green Golf Club in 1792.

The Trongate property to which he succeeded was an antique edifice on the north side of Trongate, between what are now Hutcheson and Glassford Streets, consisting of two storeys with gable ends and corby steps. A large garden extended behind. He afterwards demolished the old edifice and built on the site and on part of the garden the large and elegant tenement so well known for more than half a century as Spreull's Land, which, when in its prime, was the residence of many citizens of note.

In 1784 James Spreull paid £160 for the privilege of making an encroachment on the Hutchesons' Hospital property, and for the damage done by his new building.

No such tenement as Spreull's Land had ever been erected in Trongate or, for the matter of that, in Glasgow before, and for many years its spiral hanging "well" staircase was reckoned one of the sights of the city. It was originally designed for shops below and dwelling houses of a highly superior order (for a land) above; but like the majority of the tenements in the chief streets leading up from Buchanan Street to Blythswood Square, it is now wholly devoted to business accommodation. The eastmost shop was a fine double one—Galbraith, the silk mercers—such things as "shoddy" or "cheap goods" of any description had not been invented as yet, and many of the brawest of the braw pelisses in which the Glasgow belles of *circa* 1830 walked abroad, or the ball dresses which rustled in the Assembly Rooms in Ingram Street when Cunningham's Band struck up, were "coft" in the good old shop in question.

On its right was the wide close or passage leading to the Court, No. 182, the premises on the north side of which later were used as a chapel by some Dissenting body or other, and also as the offices of the *Glasgow Herald*. On the other side of the close, No. 184, was for many years the shop of Duncan Stewart, bookseller and stationer, next to which was that of Ewing and Wingate, the well-known tailors and clothiers.



SPREULL'S COURT, 182 TRONGATE.

The Glasgow Post Office was removed in 1840 to Glassford Street, the site of which was until recently occupied by the warehouse of Wilson, Matheson & Co. It was, indeed, a most uncomfortable place for transacting business, for the Lobby was formed by the common back close, open at both ends, through which in stormy weather, as through a furnace, the south wind whistled and the rain drifted, the covering being scarcely any protection. The rent was £20.

James Spreull was also proprietor of the lands of Linthouse, on which there was a small villa. He subsequently sold this property to Mr. Robert Watson, Banker in Glasgow, and the land is now occupied by Stevens' Shipbuilding Yard. He was partner in the firm of Spreull, Somerville & McCaul, muslin manufacturers, situated in Bell Street, nearly facing the Police Land.

An interesting historical find was made by Mr. Whitton, superintendent of the Glasgow Parks, a few years ago, in the shape of a plate which was at the root of one of the trees in the Botanic Gardens, and which bears the following inscription: "A rare and undoubted scion of the Celebrated Cruikston Tree, the witness of the loves of Mary and Darnley. This Yew, the gift of James Spreull Esq., was planted in the Glasgow Botanic Gardens by Thomas Hopkirk April 12th 1818."

James Spreull died in 1824, and included in his personal property were twelve shares in the Glasgow Tontine of 1816, and two shares in the Glasgow Tontine Assembly Rooms. One of the lives that he nominated in the Tontine was that of his youngest daughter Sarah, and a few years ago, when the number of nominees had become reduced to some half dozen, there was a proposal to divide up the capital, which amounted to some forty or fifty thousand pounds; but apparently each of the nonagenarians considered she would outlast the others, and the proposal came to nothing. We are not aware who was the last "liver."

James Spreull married Margaret McCall (born 1766, died 1836), daughter of John McCall (born 1715, died 1790) and Helen Cross, which John McCall was the eldest son of Samuel McCall (born 1681, died 1757) and Margaret Adam, which Samuel was the son of William McCall of Killockysyd, near Sanquhar. James Spreull and Margaret McCall had issue :



SPREULL'S COURT, 182 TRONGATE.

Margaret.

Helen.

John (succeeded his father as City Chamberlain, father and son holding the office for thirty-six years between them).

Hannah.

James.

Janet.

Samuel.

Samuel.

William.

Sarah.

WALTER SPREULL, between 1224 and 1270.

WALTER SPREULL, Seneschal of the Earl of Lennox before 1292.

WALTER SPREULL, Seneschal of Dumbarton 1294.

WALTER SPREULL, of Caldoun, First of Dalmure and Dalquherne, Seneschal of the Earl of Lennox 1306.

WALTER SPREULL, 1366.

WALTER SPREULL, 1441.

THOMAS SPREULL, 1466.

JOHN SPREULL, 1481.

Lord Semple.

Robert, Burgess of
Paisley 1515.

John ?

John, Rector of Glasgow
University, d. 1555.

Janet, m. Gabriel Semple,
d. 1550.

Lord Semple.

John, Rector of Cambuslang 1555.

John, Provost of Renfrew 1590.

Thomas, 1559, New Grant of Dalmure and Dalquherne.

Bailie James Alexander, m. Janet Maxwell of Pollok.
Merchant, Paisley.

Hugh Crawford of Cloberhill.

James (Last of Caldoun 1622).

John, Town Clerk of Glasgow.
b. 1615, d. (c.) 1690.

John, Bailie in Paisley, m. 1642, Janet Alexander.
b. 1607, d. 1685.

James.

Isabella, m. 1707, John.

John, m. Agnes Spreull of Milton.

Ann, m. 1674, James, Surgeon, Paisley.
b. 1643.
d. 1686.

Margaret Wingate, m. 1696, John "Bass," m. Isobel Clarke.
d. 1756.

John "Bass," m. Isobel Clarke.
b. 1646.
d. 1722.

daughter of Andrew Clarke and Margaret King.

Alexander.

Thomas, Student
of Divinity.
d. 1676.

Lillias, m. Thomas Reid.
d. 1683.

Catherine, m. John Buchanan.

Seven daughters.

Hunter, m. Agnes Crawford.

Andrew of Bkairn.

James Shortridge, m. Janet Elizabeth.
b. 1675; son of
Adam Shortridge and
Janet Robison.

Janet.
b. 1675.

Jean.
b. 1714.
d. 1719.

Grizel.
b. 1709.
d. 1777.

Janet, m. Thomas Maxwell,
Captain.
b. 1706.
d. 1772.

Thomas Maxwell,
Captain.
b. 1696. d. 1749.

Margaret,
b. 1700.
d. 1784.

James,
b. 1699.
d. 1769.
Bailie in Glasgow.

John.

John.

Margaret.
b. 1676.
d. 1691.

Son.

John, m. 1746, Hannah Park,
daughter of William
Park of Paisley.
b. 1711.
d. 1778.

Margaret.

Janet, m. Morrison.

James.

Ann.

Child.

Sir William Alexander, Chief
Baron of Exchequer.

Andrew Hunter Spreull Crawford, 1837.

Marion.

Mary.

Mary Leitch, 1800, m. William, m. 1st, Elizabeth Yuille.

Janet, m. John Smith.

Catherine.

Hannah, m. James Black.

James Glasgow City Chamberlain, m. Margaret McCall.
b. 1760, d. 1824.

Hannah.

daughter of—
John McCall, b. 1715, d. 1790, m. Helen Cross.
Samuel McCall, b. 1681, d. 1757, m. Margaret Adam.
William McCall, of Killockysyd, Sanquhar.

Christina,
b. 1802.

John,
b. 1786.

Amelia.

Margaret.

Hannah.

George,
d. 1854.

William,
d. 1828.

Hannah.

James.

John.

Archibald.

Hannah.

Jean.

Mary Ann.

William.

John.

James.

Margaret,
b. 1787.
d. 1852.

Helen,
b. 1789.
d. 1877.

John,
b. 1791.
d. 1845.

Hannah,
b. 1792.
d. 1881.

James,
b. 1795.
d. 1876.

Janet,
b. 1798.
d. 1811.

Samuel,
b. 1800.
d. 1800.

Samuel,
b. 1801.
d. 1879.

William,
b. 1804.
d. 1824.

Sarah,
b. 1809.
d. 1902.

x for had to
change his name
Shortridge to Spruce